

Suicide – Data Brief

Vermont Injury Prevention Program

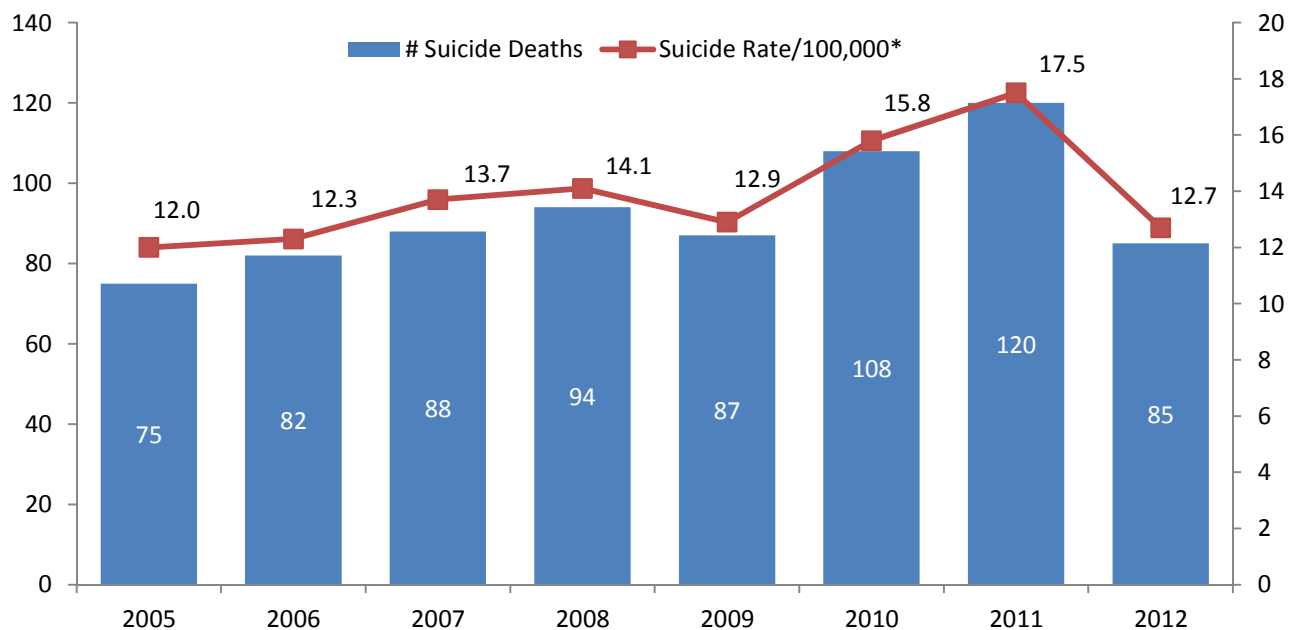
Background

Suicide was the eighth leading cause of death in Vermont and the tenth leading cause of death in the United States in 2012¹. Risk factors for suicide include depression and other mental health diagnoses or a substance-abuse disorder, often in combination with a mental disorder. More than 90% of people who die by suicide have these risk factors. Other risk factors include: prior suicide attempt; firearms in the home; exposure to suicide behavior; and family history of suicide, mental disorders or substance abuse; and family violence.²

Suicide Deaths

The Healthy Vermonters 2020 goal is to reduce suicide deaths from 15.8 per 100,000 in 2010 to 11.7 per 100,000 in 2020. After consistently increasing from 75 deaths in 2005 to 120 deaths in 2011, the number of deaths fell sharply in 2012 to 85. Accordingly, the rate of suicide deaths among Vermont residents also fell in 2012 to 12.7 per 100,000, which is similar to that for the U.S. (12.5 per 100,000).

**Number of Suicide Deaths and Suicide Death Rate Per 100,000
Vermont Residents, 2005-2012**



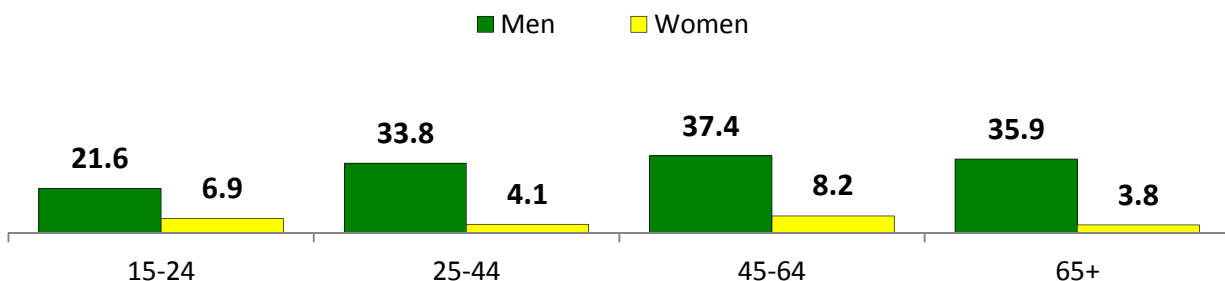
*Suicide rates are age adjusted to the U.S. 2000 population.

Men are much more likely to die by suicide than women in Vermont. In 2011-2012 there were more than five times as many male deaths (173) as female deaths (32). Correspondingly, in 2011-2012, Vermont's suicide rate was significantly higher among men than women (26.3 versus. 4.5 per 100,000). Suicide rates were consistently and significantly higher among Vermont males than females, regardless of age. Among both men and women the rate was highest in the 45-64 year old age range, 37.4 per 100,000 for men and 8.2 per 100,000 for women.

¹ Vermont Vital Statistics data from 2012 is considered preliminary.

² Mann, J.J. (2002). *A Current Perspective of Suicide and Attempted Suicide*. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 136: 302-311.

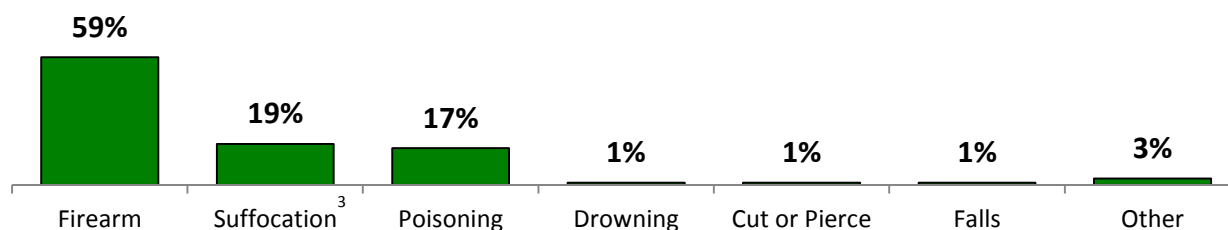
Suicide Death Rate per 100,000 Vermont Residents, 2011-2012



Leading Cause of Suicide Deaths

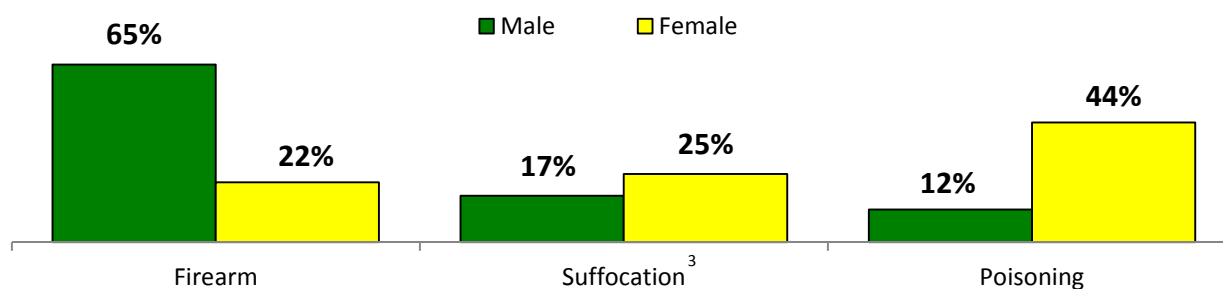
In 2011-2012, the leading cause of suicide death in Vermont was firearms (59%). (Note, nearly all gunshot wound deaths in Vermont are a result of suicide, approximately 90% on average.) One in five suicides was due to suffocation³; poisoning accounted for one in six suicides. Very few suicides were the result of drowning, cutting or piercing, or falling.

Cause of Suicide Deaths Vermont Residents, 2011-2012



There are differences in the cause of suicide death by gender. The leading cause of suicide death was firearms for men and poisoning for women. Two-thirds of suicides among men are completed with a firearm. One in six male suicides was a result of suffocation, while one in eight was due to poisoning. Among women, more than four in ten completed suicide by poisoning and a quarter each used suffocation or firearms.

Suicide Deaths by Cause and Gender Vermont Residents, 2011-2012



For more information on Injury Surveillance Data or suicide data, please contact Caroline Dawson, MS, MPA (Caroline.Dawson@state.vt.us; 802-865-7783).

³ Suffocation includes intentional self-harm deaths from hanging, strangulation, or suffocation.